

LAC Minutes – Final

Friday, 12/6/2019

Attendance:

Voting Members		Voting Members, cont.		Non-Voting Members	
Elizabeth Brewster, LAT		Jessica Martin, COMM		Kendra Cawley, Acad Aff	x
Chris Brooks, HST		Linda Paulson, MSD	x	Susan Wilson, Acad Aff	x
Josh Cary, BIT		Usha Ramanujam, BA			
Magda D'Angelis-Morris, DA	x	Davina Ramirez, ESOL			
Mandy Ellertson, HUM	x	Rekha Rao, CIS	x	Today's Guests	
Marc Goodman, CIS		Sara Robertson, LIB			
Farin Hajarizadeh, BIT	x	Julianne Sandlin, ART	x	None	
Wayne Hooke, PSY		Jim Sauvé, WR			
G. D. Iyer, CS	x	Thomas Songer, MTH			
Joyce Kaplan, BI	x	Nora Stevens, BI & HIM - Chair	x		
Rachelle Katter, HE		Delpha Thomas, ESOL - Vice-Chair	x		
Jamee Kristen, SOC		Jacki Williams, EMS	x		
Hannah Love, PHL					
Heather Lubay, JOUR					

BUSINESS

ELIWG Update

This update covered a lot of ground, so headers have been inserted to mark the key topics.

ELIWG History

ELIWG stands for **EAC/LAC Integration Work Group**, Kendra explained, though the moniker evolved a year or two after the group's formation in 2012. ELIWG is comprised of current and past leaders and members of the LAC, EAC, and EAC subcommittees. From the beginning, ELIWG sought to normalize assessment of core outcomes--have it become part of our regular assessment process. In what she termed a "point of pain," Kendra said the group concluded a few years ago that we were doing a poor job of assessing our core outcomes. A turning point occurred when it was agreed the core outcomes belonged in the (General Education) Discipline Studies.

Creation of DSACs

Discipline Study Areas Committees (DSACs) for Arts & Letters; Social Science; Science, Math & Computer Science; and Cultural Literacy (CL) were created in 2017. Each DSAC was asked what its disciplines had in common and, from there, each established a proprietary outcome statement and rubric. DSAC representatives designed their first signature assignments in 2017-2018. These pilot assignments debuted in winter 2019 and a sample of resulting artifacts were scored last spring. [Nora shared scoring and inter-rater reliability highlights from 2018-19 at the October LAC meeting.] New or revised signature assignments, from the SACs going before the GEARS Committee this year, will be collected and scored in winter and spring 2020. The new outcomes are referred to as General Education Outcomes, but Kendra said it remains unclear whether Gen Ed Outcomes and Institutional Outcomes are the same thing.

2018-19's assessments were round two for Cultural Literacy and the resulting scores indicated problems with the already-revised rubric. Kendra said the lesson learned is that we are not teaching what we think we are teaching. A new CL DSAC will be formed

this year and that group will go back to the drawing board and devise a new rubric. It also will be tasked with discussing whether CL belongs in all degrees or just the AAOT and ASOT/B as it is now.

New Accreditation Standards

Changes are afoot at the accreditation level. The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) approved new compliance standards in August 2019 that mandate core-level or institutional outcomes. Before now, such outcomes were optional, but if a college had them, they were expected to assess them. Kendra displayed NWCCU's all-new Standard 1.C.6, which reads:

1.C.6 Consistent with its mission, the institution establishes and assesses, across all associate and bachelor level programs or within a General Education curriculum, institutional learning outcomes and/or core competencies. Examples of such learning outcomes and competencies include, but are not limited to, effective communication skills, global awareness, cultural sensitivity, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and logical thinking, problem solving, and/or information literacy.

Assessing Communication

The line about "effective communication skills" in 1.C.6 is problematic because it is important to every program and discipline at PCC, yet none of the DSACs adopted Communication as its outcome.

Various SACs have intentionally assessed communication in some form or other in the past, but their assignments always were tailored to a particular communication rubric. Last year, Kendra saw an opportunity to assess writing across the curriculum using the trove of written works collected in the DSAC pilot, and did so using a modified version of the AAC&U VALUE rubric for Written Communication. She knew going in that this rubric was not ideal, but there was not time to locate a more suitable tool. At today's meeting, she shared the scoring results and looked at a list of the highest writing courses completed by those whose artifacts were scored.

A brief discussion ensued as to where we might assess communication. WR 121, which is required for all PCC degrees, came up today as it has so many times before, but Kendra explained that the course's emphasis on writing process rather than content makes it less suitable as a large-scale target. At the ELIWG meeting on December 3, someone floated the idea of having CTE programs assess communication. CTE SACs already have mapped their program outcomes to the current Communication core outcome. Another suggestion was made to have every SAC (LDC-DE and CTE) assess Communication every three years. Is it possible to create a rubric that is not modality specific? Could one rubric work for written, oral, and visual communication?

What is communication? Taking the disciplines represented by those present today (ART, BI, BIT, CIS, CS, DA, EMS, ESOL, HIM, HUM, and MSD), it is evident that communication means something vastly different in each area. Linda said the Management and Supervisory Development Advisory Committee met today, in fact, and verbal communication rose to the top in its discussion of the most important skills. Written communication is important, too, especially the ability to convey tact in a memo or letter.

Communication Summit

Kendra will convene a Communication Summit this winter. Faculty from Writing and Communication Studies have offered to do a mini workshop on how their areas have shifted from content to process. They will not have time to come up with a rubric that fits all, but the summit will be a starting point for several vested disciplines, including art, to have a meaningful conversation about communication and how to assess it.

Teamwork also has come up in conversations about assessing communication, but if we are going to assess teamwork, we also have to teach it. Merely requiring students to work in groups does not count, but if one devotes class time to *how* to work effectively in teams, that is different.

Other Updates

Learning Outcomes Assessment (LOA) Conference

Originally comprised of four-year colleges, LOA opened its doors to two-year schools when Oregon became a 'LEAP state' (i.e., when it adopted the AAC&U's VALUE rubrics) and participated in the earliest Multi-State Collaborative. At the recent conference, Nora was the only faculty member and the only community college person there. Reps from EOU, OHSU, OSU, PCC, SOU, and WOU were attending in person or by phone. Those who have gone through accreditation recently shared that the evaluators' feedback will come back as if it were following the new standards. Another change was the need for each institution to respond to disaggregated IPEDs data for their school that NWCCU provided to them. Kendra does not have all of the details on what accreditation will look like under the new standards, but she believes the mid-cycle visits will stay because they offer value to the institutions and to the evaluators.

Nora said the LOA participants were very candid about their "warts and diamonds" when it came to describing their assessment practices. One school still does everything on paper, though its lead person is retiring and his replacement will be moving them to a digital system. Among all the schools represented, Nora said PCC seems to fall somewhere in the middle in terms of learning assessment processes and efficacy.

NWCCU Accreditation Conference

Nora and Jamee joined Kendra in Seattle in November for the annual accreditation conference. They thought they would hear more about the new standards, but the focus was Student Success. Hearing other schools talk about their best practices is always valuable, and this conference was no exception. One example: a college in Georgia, realizing that financial woes are a common barrier to degree completion, took the unusual step of paying off their students' outstanding tuition balances (up to \$1500 each). Many students thought they were being pranked when college representatives explained what they had done, but this unusual move simultaneously closed an equity gap, improved graduation rates, and built considerable student loyalty.

Learning Assessment Plans Received

The due date for CTE multi-year plans and for LDC-DE 2019-20 assessment plans was December 2. Susan reported that 23 of 47 (48.9%) of the CTE SACs had submitted their MYPs, and 21 of 39 (53.8%) CTE SACs had turned in descriptions of their Technical Skill Attainment measures (TSAs). On the LDC-DE side, 16 of 35 SACs (45.7%) had submitted their ARFs or RRFs (assessment or reassessment) forms/plans.

When someone asked about the future of ePortfolios at PCC, Kendra said they remain a 'pipe dream' for now, but the good news is that all of the LMS platforms currently under consideration by PCC can support ePortfolios, so that gets us a little closer.

CTE Assessment Reporting Template

The group ran out of time to look at the revised template and there were insufficient members present to reach a quorum, so Nora said she would send the latest template to the entire council via email and request an electronic vote. [Update: On Dec. 10, Nora sent an announcement that she received enough Yes votes to approve the new form.]

Adjournment

Nora adjourned the meeting at 3:00. The next meeting will take place January 24.